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UNCLAS ROME 001475

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR OES/IHA, HHS FOR OSOPHS (E.YUAN)

GENEVA FOR HEALTH ATTACHE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: TBIO KFLU IT WHO

SUBJECT: ITALY PARTICIPATION AT WHA PREPAREDNESS MINISTERIAL

REF: STATE 076464

OGHA-103-06

¶1. (U) Per instructions in reftel, on May 15, Science Specialist delivered Secretary Leavitt's invitation to Italy's Minister of Health, plus up to two staff members, to attend the May 22 Ministerial meeting on influenza preparedness issues at the World Health Assembly (WHA).

¶2. (U) Italy's new Minister of Health has not yet been named following national elections on April 9-10. Senior Medical Officer Dr. Francesco Cicogna of the Ministry's Directorate General for European Union and International Relations assured Science Specialist that Secretary Leavitt's invitation would be brought to the new Minister's attention if he or she is named prior to May 22. We will inform the Department, HHS, and Geneva, if the new Minister is named by that date and decides to attend the World Health Assembly and the May 22 meeting.

¶3. (U) Dr. Cicogna informed us that as of May 15, Italy will be represented at the Secretary's May 22 meeting by Dr. Donato Greco, Director General for Health Prevention, Ministry of Health. Dr. Greco, who speaks fluent English, represented Italy at the April 27 Health Ministerial Meeting of the G-8 in Moscow. He would be accompanied by Dr. Cicogna and/or Professor Giancarlo Majori, Head of the WHO Liaison Office for Research and Management of Tropical Diseases at Italy's Higher Institute of Health.

SPOGLI